Crane News

September 2016 - December 2016

By Soji Kashiwagi

Welcome to the fall edition of Crane News, a quarterly update of Grateful Crane shows and events for GCE board members, cast, musicians, crew and GCE Alumni (former board members, GCE family) and supporters. A lot of exciting things have been happening of late, and we want to keep you up-to-date on the latest!

Upcoming Events

December 23, 2016: Grateful Four to perform at Sakura Gardens (5:15 p.m.) and Sakura ICF (5:45 p.m.)

January 4, 2017: "Fukushima Honda Tomodachi Concert" at Aratani Theatre with Daniel Ho and Fukushima youth at 8 p.m.

January 14, 2017: "A Seed: Ichi-Ryu Manbai" at Armstrong Theatre in Torrance at 8 p.m.

January 15, 2017: Frank Kawase's 80th Birthday Luncheon in Orange County

February 18, 2017: Day of Remembrance Dinner in San Mateo

March 25, 2017: GCE's 9th Anniversary Dinner at Nishi Hongwanji

April 29-30, 2017: "Nihonmachi" and "Growing up Sansei" at Sacramento Buddhist Church.

May 29, 2017 (Memorial Day): GCE to perform at Aimee Machida's wedding.

June 10, 2017: "Camp Dance" at the Gardena JCI (75th Anniversary of EO 9066 event.)

Fall 2017: Chicago production of "Camp Dance," "Nihonmachi" or "Growing up Sansei"

Also in 2017: Continuation of "Far East Feasts," "Growing up Sansei," and new shows, "The Grapevine," "The Mommy & Daddy Show," and "Hiro."

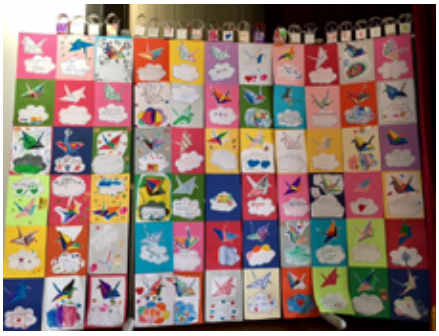
Peace Workshop at Elementary School in Crenshaw District

September 14th, 2016

Scott and **Keiko** presented "Peace Boxes" from children in Hiroshima to children at View Park Prep Elementary School, and told the story of Sadako Sasaki and her 1,000 origami cranes. In exchange, the children wrote messages of peace and friendship back to the children at Sadako's school in Hiroshima. On October 31, Keiko delivered the boxes and messages to 500 students at Nobori-cho Elementary school in Hiroshima.

Keiko shows a student at View Park Elementary how to put the "crane box" together.

Keiko delivered messages of peace from children in the U.S to students at Nobori Cho Elementary in Hiroshima, Japan.



Betty Hiji's 80th Birthday Luncheon in Westlake Village

September 18th, 2016

GCE supporter **Betty Hiji** turned her "Evening with Scott & Keiko" silent auction item into an 80th birthday party for herself and about 100 guests at a luncheon held at the Four Seasons Hotel in Westlake Village. **Keiko** and **Scott** performed a variety of songs chosen by Betty, and I spoke about the history of Grateful Crane. After the event, Betty sent us a thank you card which said, "We've had a number of celebrations over the years, but everyone agreed that this one topped them all!" Betty also enclosed a check for $1,730.00 and a check from a guest for $100.00, made out to GCE. The $1,730.00 represented all the monetary gifts Betty received for her birthday, which she donated to Grateful Crane.

Keiko and Scott performed Betty Hiji's favorite songs at her 80th birthday party.

GCE Participates in Kizuna Family Showdown

September 24th, 2016

For the fifth straight year, GCE put together a team for Kizuna's Family Showdown event. Participating from GCE included **Soji**, **Nancy**, **Patty Takayama**, **Lisa Joe**, **Hideo Kimura**, **Lisa Horikawa** and **Emily Yoshihara**. GCE members **Helen Ota** and **Michael Palma** also served as the event MCs. We finished 11th out of 29 teams—not bad!

GCE's team at the Kizuna Family Showdown: (l-r) Hideo Kimura, Lisa Joe, Lisa Horikawa, Soji Kashiwagi, Emily Yoshihara and Nancy Takayama (Not pictured: Patty Takayama)

Growing up Sansei (GUS) Events at Nishi and OCBC

October 1-2nd, 2016

Our second and third GUS events were very well received by close to 270 people at both Nishi and OCBC. At Nishi, we had close to 100 and on Sunday we had 166 people, most of whom were Sansei. Our new Acapella group, the Grateful Four, set the tone with the singing of "Hurting Each Other," and "Sound of Silence." Both the singing of the songs and having members of the Yonsei generation present to sing them was much appreciated by our Sansei audience members. They were also deeply touched by the reading that followed, and were enlightend by the information **Dr. Satsuki Ina** shared about the Nisei's WWII trauma, and how it has been transmitted to the Sansei and subsequent generations.

The Grateful Four--Lisa Horikawa, Aimee Machida, Emily Yoshihara and Michael Murata--made their debut at the GUS event at Nishi Hongwanji.

Special thanks to Dr. Ina for joining us from the Bay Area; our cast **Ping Wu**, **Haruye Ioka**, **Kurt Kuniyoshi**, **Dian Kobayashi** and **Shaun Shimoda**, and our Grateful Four: **Michael Murata** (Musical Director), **Aimee Machida**, **Lisa Horikawa**, **Emily Yoshihara** (Saturday), and Michael, Lisa, **Helen Ota** and **Haruye Ioka** (Sunday.) Thank you also to our board members: **Nancy Takayama**, **Christy Sakamoto**, **Joann Hirose**, **Michael Murata** and **Cathy Tanaka** for all of your help and support at both events.

Growing up Sansei cast and Acapella singers at OCBC (l-r) Ping Wu, Haruye Ioka, Shaun Shimoda, Dian Kobayashi, Michael Murata, Lisa Horikawa, Soji Kashiwagi, Kurt Kuniyoshi and Helen Ota.

Grateful Crane featured on "Nice to Meet You," a local Japanese TV program

October 6th, 2016

Mayumi Shirai, host of "Nice to Meet You," interviewed me at a home studio in Newport Beach for a Channel 44 airing on October 20 and October 27. The program's core audience is Shin Issei, and this interview served as an introduction to this audience on a wider level. During the interview, I talked about Grateful Crane, JA history, our tours to Tohoku and promoted our Japan Tour Concert on November 5 at Higashi Honganji.

Soji and Mayumi Shirai, host of "Nice to Meet You" program which aired locally on Channel 44.

GCE Singers Remember Fuzzy Fujimoto at Memorial Service

October 8th, 2016

Fuzzy Fujimoto, our longtime fan and supporter, passed away this summer, and GCE members **Helen Ota**, **Kurt Kuniyoshi** and **Hiro Morozumi** performed at his memorial service held at the Pasadena Buddhist Church. Fuzzy's wife, Irene, requested that in lieu of koden to the family, that people make donations to GCE, the Pasadena Buddhist Church and the South Pasadena Public Library.

Helen Ota, Hiro Morozumi and Kurt Kuniyoshi paid tribute to the late Fuzzy Fujimoto at his memorial held at the Pasadena Buddhist Church.

Fall Far East Feast with Chef John Nishio

October 15th, 2016

The Fall Feast, hosted by Chef **John Nishio** and his family, brought together a group of older Sansei who all had fond memories of going to the Far East Café as children and adults. As we went around the room, each one remembered their favorite dishes such as homyu, pakkai, almond duck and chow mein—and lucky for them, each of those items and a whole lot more—was on the menu that evening. The meal, combined with Chef John's historical video and music and songs provided by **Scott Nagatani**, **Keiko Kawashima** and **Kurt Kuniyoshi** made for a memorable evening that was enjoyed by all. Thank you to GCE board members **Nancy Takayama** and **Cathy Tanaka** for all your help, and special thanks once again to **Chef John**, **Susan** and **Michael** for a wonderful meal!

Scott, Keiko and Kurt delighted the crowd with Sansei songs at the Fall Far East Feast.

GCE performs nostalgic songs for Gardena Buddhist Church's 90th Anniversary

October 30th, 2016

Members of the Gardena Buddhist Church gathered together to celebrate the church's 90th anniversary at a special luncheon held at the church's social hall. GCE members **Helen Ota**, **Lisa Joe**, **Michael Palma**, **Jason Fong**, **Haruye Ioka**, **Aimee Machida** and **Hiro Morozumi** were on hand to provide the entertainment, which included a wide range of Japanese favorites, classics from the 60's and some Disney tunes for the kids. It was a little something for everyone, and it was well-received by all in attendance.

Gardena Buddhist Church (cont.)

Aimee Machida, Helen Ota, Michael Palma, Jason Fong, Haruye Ioka, Lisa Joe and Hiro Morozumi performed a variety of tunes at the Gardena Buddhist Church's 90th Anniversary luncheon.

Japan Tour Concert brings Community together at Higashi Honganji

November 5th, 2016

In front of about 150 community members, GCE held a free concert at Higashi Honganji in Little Tokyo which featured our tour members singing songs from our 2nd Goodwill Tour to Tohoku, Japan. During the songs, we showed slides from the tour which illustrated the deep, emotional impact we made on the people of Tohoku. At the end of the concert, we made a pitch for donations to support the Association of Aid and Relief Japan's (AAR Japan) bottled water project for kindergarten children and psycho-social activities for seniors living in temporary housing. This fundraising effort brought in a total of $3,200.00, which was wired to AAR Japan in late November. In a separate donation, audience member Mitchell Kodama presented us with a $3,000.00 donation to GCE from his foundation.

Goodwill Tour members Fusako Shiotani, Aimee Machida, Helen Ota, Michael Palma, Keiko Kawashima, Merv Maruyama, Kurt Kuniyoshi, Haruye Ioka, Lisa Joe and Scott Nagatani performed songs from our tour at the community concert at Higashi Honganji.

Tour members who performed in the concert included **Haruye Ioka**, **Lisa Joe**, **Keiko Kawashima**, **Kurt Kuniyoshi**, **Aimee Machida**, **Merv Maruyama**, **Helen Ota**, **Michael Palma**, **Fusako Shiotani**, accompanied by musical director **Scott Nagatani** on piano. Also attending were tour members **Nancy Takayama**, **June Hayashi**, **Mitzi Toshima**, **Mika Aoki** and **Ping Wu**.

GCE Receives Heritage Award from the Aquarium of the Pacific

November 6th, 2016

GCE received this award at the Aquarium's annual Autumn Festival, "in recognition of dedicated service to Asian-American communities." As part of the festivities, **Keiko** and **Scott** performed some songs prior to the award ceremony. Thank you to GCE members **Kurt Kuniyoshi**, **Yoko Ibuki**, **Darrell Kunitomi**, **Haruye Ioka**, **Ping Wu** and **Nancy Takayama** who came out to support us at this event.

Haruye Ioka, Scott Nagatani, Hideo Kimura, Keiko Kawashima, Yoko Ibuki, Darrell Kunitomi and Kurt Kuniyoshi were on hand to receive the Heritage Award from the Aquarium of the Pacific in Long Beach.

Misora Hibari show a hit in San Fernando

November 13th, 2016

A little over 100 people enjoyed our tribute to Misora Hibari at the San Fernando Japanese American Community Center. Several people who attended said they knew every song, and some Shin Issei in the audience told us they learned a lot about Japanese Americans at our show. Because of this, one Shin Issei said that our show was a "must-see" for the local Shin Issei community.

Misora Hibari (cont.)

Misora Hibari Show cast and musicians in San Fernando: (l-r) Keiko Kawashima, Haruye Ioka, Merv Maruyama, Fusako Shiotani, Helen Ota. (Back row) Danny Yamamoto, Soji Kashiwagi, Hiro Morozumi, Scott Nagatani.

Performing in this show included **Haruye Ioka**, **Keiko Kawashima**, **Merv Maruyama**, **Helen Ota** and **Fusako Shiotani**, with **Scott Nagatani**, **Danny Yamamoto** and **Hiro Morozumi** backing them up as our live band. Special thanks to **Nancy Takayama** for inviting us to perform in the Valley once again, and to **Cathy Tanaka** for coming out to help with the set-up on the morning of the show.

Proposal to Keiro Submitted for $100,000 Grant

November 14th, 2016

We submitted a grant for the maximum amount of $100,000 to fund singing and writing classes for seniors, GUS events in three Southern California counties, regular programs at Keiro's former facilities, a presentation of our Misora Hibari show at the Aratani Theatre, and the addition of a program coordinator position to implement our new programs.

Camp Dance cast delights seniors and families at Sakura ICF Holiday Luncheon

November 27th, 2016

The original cast from our "Camp Dance" show—**Jason Fong**, **Haruye Ioka**, **Keiko Kawashima**, **Darrell Kunitomi** and **Kurt Kuniyoshi**—were together again to perform for 250 Sakura ICF residents and their families at their annual holiday luncheon. At their request, we performed a number of holiday favorites along with some Japanese classics.

Darrell Kunitomi, Keiko Kawashima, Haruye Ioka, Soji Kashiwagi, Scott Nagatani, Kurt Kuniyoshi and Jason Fong brought holiday cheer to 101 year-old Jack Kunitomi, Bev Ito and residents of Sakura ICF (formerly Keiro).

Holiday Far East Feast brings a festive feeling to Feast Goers

December 3rd, 2016

The holiday version of the Far East Feast featured **Keiko**, **Scott** and **Aimee Machida** providing the holiday cheer with the singing of Christmas favorites, Japanese tunes and Sansei songs from the 60's. Attended by friends of **John Nakaki** and **Gene Kanamori**, this feast also gave us an opportunity to share our Japan tour with our audience which included our long-time supporters **Frank Kawana** and **Frank and Betty Hiji**. After a brief slideshow presentation, Aimee and Keiko shared their thoughts and feelings about the tour, and we presented the Hiji's and Frank Kawana with framed, autographed posters from everyone in our tour group, as a token of our gratitude and appreciation to them for their support of our tour. Special thanks to board members **Nancy Takayama**, **Christy Sakamoto** and **Joann Hirose** for all your help as our servers and dish washers! Thank you also to **Mika Aoki** and **Erick Batisla** for your help, and to John and Gene for your silent auction donation which made this night possible. Thank you once again to **Chef John Nishio**, his wife **Susan**, and son **Michael** for a fabulous meal - it was truly enjoyed by all!

Scott, Keiko and Aimee Machida performed Christmas songs and other JA favorites at the Holiday Far East Feast.

GCE returns to Nikkei Senior Gardens for annual holiday dinner

December 7th, 2016

For the past five years, GCE has provided the holiday cheer at this annual dinner for the seniors and their families held at the Nikkei Senior Gardens assisted living home in San Fernando Valley. At this year's dinner, **Keiko** and **Kurt Kuniyoshi** were joined by the Grateful Four acapella singers made up of **Michael Murata** (Musical Director), **Aimee Machida**, **Lisa Horikawa** and **Emily Yoshihara**. Along with the singing of Christmas favorites and a koto solo by Emily Yoshihara, each member introduced themselves to the Nisei residents, many of whom are in their 80's and 90's. These personal messages were a special gift from our younger members to our elders during this season of giving.

Kurt Kuniyoshi and Keiko provided percussion for the Grateful Four: Michael Murata, Emily Yoshihara, Aimee Machida and Lisa Horikawa at the Nikkei Senior Gardens holiday dinner.

GCE has some fun in the photo booth at the Nikkei Senior Gardens holiday dinner.

GCE provides entertainment at LTSC Toy Drive

December 11th, 2016

Keiko and **Scott** sang Christmas songs at this event held at the Toyota USA Automobile Museum in Torrance. Invited by former board chair John Nakaki, the event organizers—Sansei Legacy and Yonsei basketball—were able to collect over 300 toys for underprivileged children living in Los Angeles.

Scott and Keiko performed Christmas songs at this toy drive event held at the Toyota USA Automobile Museum in Torrance.

Volunteer Opportunities Available for GCE Events and Shows

Volunteers are key to the success of GCE. In 2017, volunteers will be needed at our events, assisting us at will-call, CD sales, backstage and with set-up and clean-up after our shows.

For more info, contact Soji at soji1062@verizon.net.

Holiday Card mailed to GCE Mailing List in late November

Our Tohoku-themed holiday card started arriving in people's mailboxes on Saturday, December 3.

GCE's 2016 Holiday Card.

GCE News and Updates!

Grateful Four to perform at Keiro/Sakura Gardens & ICF on December 23

Our Grateful Four singers—Michael, Aimee, Lisa and Emily—will be bringing holiday cheer to the residents at both the Sakura Gardens Retirement Home and Intermediate Care Facility on Friday, December 23 at 5:15 p.m. and 5:45 p.m.

GCE Accountant Robert McClain to retire from position at the end of 2016

Robert McClain has decided that he wants to enjoy his retirement and has decided to resign from his position as GCE's part-time accountant. We thank Robert for his service over the past three years! **Amy Nozawa**, a long-time fan of GCE, will be taking over as our new bookkeeper beginning in January 2017.

GCE to Participate in "Fukushima Honda Tomodachi Concert" on Jan. 4, 2017

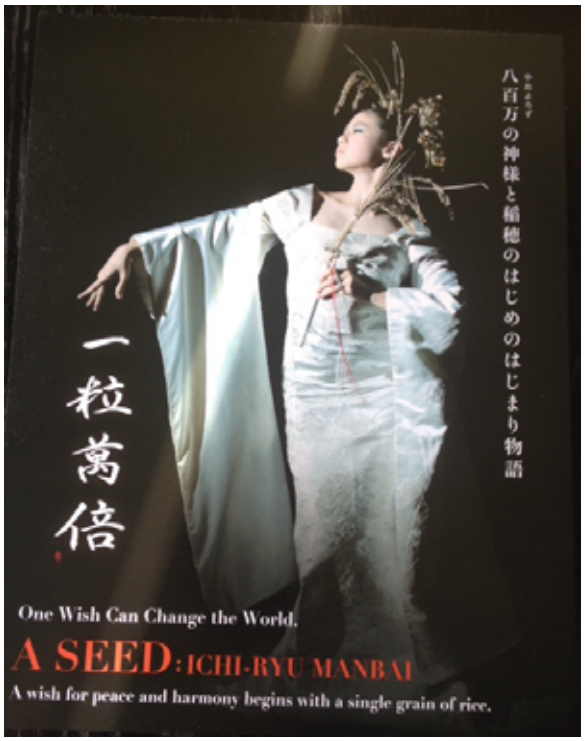
GCE Japan tour members will share the stage with Grammy-award winning musician **Daniel Ho** and youth from Fukushima at this special free concert to be held on Wednesday, January 4, 2017 at 8 p.m. at the Aratani Theatre. Presented by American Honda and the JACCC, GCE will perform a 20-minute set during the concert featuring songs from our tour, and the sharing of a couple of Japan experiences from tour members.

GCE will share the stage with Grammy Award-winner Daniel Ho and youth from Fukushima, Japan.

GCE to collaborate with group from Japan to present "A Seed: Ichi-Ryu Manbai" on January 14, 2017

Thanks to a recommendation from our Japan tour kimono stylist **Manami Matsuura**, GCE will be working with NPO Team Itadakimasu from Tokyo to present this theatrical production on Saturday, January 14, 2017 at 8 p.m at the James Armstrong Theatre in Torrance. Here's a description of the show: "Inspired by Japanese mythology, artists from Japan and the United States will come together to tell the story of the beginning of the universe, and how a single grain of rice grew into millions that sustains all our lives. Join us for an exciting evening of live taiko drums, contemporary and traditional Japanese dance and kimono, Noh drama, and storytelling in both English and Japanese. East meets West as we celebrate life and the blessings of Mother Earth."

GCE members **Merv Maruyama** and **Keiko Kawashima** will be featured in the show as English-speaking storytellers.



GCE is collaborating with artists from Japan in this U.S. premiere production on "A Seed: Ichi-Ryu Manbai" at the Armstrong Theatre in Torrance.

SAVE THE DATE: MARCH 25, 2017
GCE's 9th ANNUAL FUNDRAISING DINNER
"AT THE MOVIES"

"At the Movies" will be the theme of our 2017 Annual Fundraising Dinner, as we look back at the movies we've watched, the songs that we've sung and how motion pictures have given us hope and strength during some difficult times before, during and after WWII. Sponsorship opportunities are available. Email us at gratefulcrane@gmail.com for more information.

GCE Supporter Frank Kawase to celebrate 80th Birthday on January 15, 2017

Keiko and Scott will be giving a special surprise performance of Frank Kawase's favorite songs at his 80th birthday luncheon on Sunday, January 15 in Orange County. Frank's wife, Joan, invited us to perform.

GCE to perform at San Mateo Day of Remembrance Dinner on February 18

Steve Okamoto, a former San Mateo City Councilman, has invited us to perform at this fundraising dinner for a memorial at the site of the Tanforan Assembly Center in San Bruno (near San Francisco.) The event is also a commemoration of the 75th anniversary of Executive Order 9066 on February 19, 1942.

Upcoming Events/Shows in Discussion

A new show currently in development is "Hiro," a musical adventure based on the life of GCE musician Hiro Morozumi, a Shin-Issei who has overcome being bullied as a youngster to lead a life as an enormously talented pianist, keyboardist and guitarist.

Grateful Crane Ensemble Mission

The Grateful Crane Ensemble, Inc. is a non-profit theater group whose mission is to present educational and theatrical programs in appreciation for the unique hardships and inspiring contributions of Japanese Americans in our country's history.

Grateful Crane Ensemble Board of Directors

Allen Goya Joann Hirose Soji Kashiwagi
Michael Murata Christy Sakamoto Nancy Takayama Cathy Tanaka

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